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PANAM YOUTH OLYMPIC QUALIFIER RESULTS

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The beautiful city of Acapulco, on the Mexican Pacific Coast, saw the PANAM Qualification stages for the 2014 Nanjing Youth Olympic Games take place this weekend. A great atmosphere and some incredible performances by the 58 participating athletes from the 12 represented nations ensured an impressive spectacle for all those in attendance.

With this being a Youth level competition, there was no riding so it was a great opportunity for both the fencers and swimmers to show their skills before the combined event. In the morning fence, the athletes competed in the round robin format to decide the leaders before the swim. Prior to the competitors making their way to the pool, the organisers tested the ladder system. Two formats were tried out on the single strip, one touch and unlimited touches in 45seconds, providing an exciting and enjoyable experience for the intrigued spectators.

One week after celebrating his 17th birthday, Mexico's Ricardo Vera booked his place for the big show in China next summer after winning the men's event in Acapulco. Having come second in with his epee and fifth in the swim, he made no mistake in the combined run/shoot to claim first place with a total of 4832 points.

There were seven Mexicans in the top ten, confirming the strength in depth and the growing stature of the Central American country on the world stage. Luis Cruz took bronze. With Vera taking the NORCECA qualification spot, the second available place for Nanjing 2014 was for the best placed South American (CSPM) athletes, and in this case it was Berengerth Sequera from Venezuela who ensured his presence at the Youth Olympic Games next summer.

In the women's event, Guatemala's Isabel Brand claimed the automatic qualification spot for the Youth Olympic Games after she came second behind Hungary's Anna Toth. Bronze went to Sophia Hernandez, also from Guatemala. With two spots available for the Youth Olympic Games at this competition, with, like in the men's, one going to NORCECA and one to South America, it was Javiera Rosas from Chile who booked her place for the Nanjing 2014 Youth Olympic Games as the CSPM competitor with the highest final position in the standings.